

THE OLDTIMER

Volume 31, Number 1

The Newsletter of the Josephine County Historical Society

March, 1996

We have a date

MARCH

■ Painter John Wise Chapman's lost confederate work, a lithograph, and Ramsey family memorabilia on display at Evergreen Federal, all month.

■ Style show at the Elks Club, sponsored by Emblem Club #444, March 30.

APRIL

■ Senior Easter Egg Hunt, April 6, at the Schmidt House gardens.

■ Deadline for next Oldtimer, April 15. (Sound familiar?)

■ Volunteer potluck, April 27.

MAY

■ Living History Tours for "Amazing May," May 17.

■ Society meeting in Sunny Valley at the old town hall, May 18.

JUNE

■ Bus Tour to the Klamath Falls' county museum and the Baldwin Hotel, June 15.

JULY

■ Annual Pie Social in Wilderville, July 20.

For information on any of these events call 479-7827.

But officer ...

Study up with brief bio of three new leaders of the society

By Lee Ann Tardieu

Another year means another round of officers and board members — all voted in by you and announced at the annual meeting.

The position of treasurer, however, remains unfilled. If anyone has the time and inclination to be the fourth musketeer in the officer line-up, please call Rose Scott, our executive director, 479-7827.

So here's the run-down on the three majors in charge of the society at present.

MARILYN LUTTRELL

Marilyn, our new president, was born in Oklahoma City, Okla., and moved to Merlin in 1972 where she currently resides with her husband, Al.

After settling down and starting her own business, Mr. Auto Parts, she spent eight years creating the Merlin Community Park and one year on the Haines Apple Tree project, which is near her home.

It was at the rededication of the Haines Apple Tree in April 1992 where Rose Scott introduced herself to Marilyn and invited her to attend a board meeting; Marilyn has been actively involved with the society ever since. And her energy has been behind many of the society's new projects, fund-raisers and acquisitions ever since.

Marilyn has two sons, Keith and Kevin. Currently attending Rogue Community College, Kevin lives in Merlin with his wife Lou and their two children, Kevin and Kristina. Keith is in the Army, stationed now in Germany with his wife Sabine and their



Lee Ann Tardieu, Roger Ramsey and Marilyn Luttrell, who was not available for photo, will head up the society. A treasurer is still needed for this year.

two kids, Christopher and Teresa.

When Marilyn isn't working on her latest project for the society, the Roberts Research Library, she spends her time as executive director of the Sunny Valley Applegate Trail Society. And when she takes time out, she and Al enjoy traveling throughout the United States.

ROGER RAMSEY

President-elect Roger Ramsey is a fifth generation resident of Josephine County,

See OFFICERS page 2.

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born in Grants Pass, and has served on the board since 1988, most recently as chair of the publishing committee. He's also chaired the historic sites and nominating committees and served on the budget committee.

Roger has presented mining history and children's programs for the society, played tour guide with trusty sidekick Larry McLane, and took a turn as Santa's helper at the Christmas open house.

Roger also serves as president of the Golden Coyote Wetlands, Inc., an educational, non-profit organization that is working to restore a historic placer gold mining site along Coyote Creek covering 132 acres. The site is across from the Golden townsite, which Roger owns, and which several of his family have mined.

He also serves on the board of directors for the Applegate Trail Society, which hopes to open an Applegate Trail Interpretive Center near the covered bridge in Sunny Valley this summer. Included in this project is relocating his family's old mine cabin, blacksmith's shop, smoke house and outhouse (talk about all-inclusive) from the west fork of Althouse Creek in the Illinois Valley to the Sunny Valley site. He's worked on this project for 11 years.

A maker of history himself, Roger is a member of the Grants Pass High School Hall of Fame. And he's passing his stories on to his daughter Kierra, who's 5.

LEE ANN TARDIEU

New secretary Lee Ann Tardieu was born and brought up in Redwood City, Calif.

After earning a bachelor's degree in interior design from San Jose State University, she worked as a commercial designer at an office furniture dealership in San Jose before relocating to Grants Pass with her husband Greg in 1988. Like most native Californians, they hoped to find a quieter lifestyle here.

Greg is a social studies teacher at Grants Pass High School, where she also worked until the birth of their son Alexander in 1992. While staying home to raise Alexander, Lee Ann is pleased to be able to assist the high school in various projects. She's also spent time working in conjunction with the Rotary Club as meet director for the Rotary Invitational Track and Field Meet held each May.

Believing in the importance of taking an active role in the community, Lee Ann enjoys her involvement with the society. Serving as secretary for two years in a row, she has become much more involved this year, serving as the publishing committee's co-chair and assisting with fundraising projects as well.

When time allows, which it mostly doesn't, Lee Ann enjoys gardening and traveling.

Expect a call from us soon

Expect a telephone call from an officer or director of the society's board soon.

Since this is such an exciting time for the society, the board is planning a "Let's Get Acquainted" telethon to share the society's plans with each of our members.

This will *not* be a solicitation for money, but

your help is needed in another way. to reach our goal of increasing society membership, we want to gather names of friends, neighbors or associates who may be interested in history. We will do the contacting, all we ask from you is the lead.

Could you have a name and phone number ready?

Letters to the editor

Josephine Co. Historical Society:

We wish to thank you for our 1996 Applegate Trail calendar. We wish to request an additional calendar to give to a cousin whose husband is an Applegate descendant.

His name is James Curtis and he is a great-great-grandson of Charles Applegate. James' mother was an Applegate.

Benjamin & Reva Cooley, Portland

Editor's note on the calendar: We have had many interesting comments on this year's calendar. There is, however, one correction: While the date of the Blue Moon Antiques Building (Sherer-Judson) was on the calendar at 1890, we omitted the business date of Ward Warren's establishment, which is 1988. We apologize for the error.



Rose Scott:

Dutchie and I would like to thank you and your staff at the historical society for the wonderful treatment we have received throughout the month of October. (Mondays Make History series on their business, Byrd's Market.)

It has been a real fun month for us to take a look back in the past and receive lots of comments from the wonderful people of Southern Oregon. Thank you again. You are all wonderful.

Bob & Dutchie Byrd, Grants Pass

Note: Evergreen Federal has promised an annual heritage days reception like the one that topped off the Byrd's month.

THE OLDTIMER

is the newsletter of the Josephine County Historical Society,
508 S.W. Fifth St., Grants Pass, OR 97526.
(503) 479-7827



Annual membership dues are \$15 and include a subscription.



Edith Decker — editor
Lee Ann Tardieu & Joan Momsen
publishing committee chairmen



The circulation of The Oldtimer is 650.

Mystery photo: From the "unidentified" file, if you know the names of any of these well-dressed lads, call the society: 479-7827.



Reproductions of this and other cool photos from our files are available from the research library.

In the community

■ **MAKING AN EXHIBIT OF OURSELVES.** Pat Bristol is taking over the 1996 Evergreen Bank exhibits from Joan Snider who did a great job in 1995. Pat began her term with a display of memorabilia from the Heston collection. Let us know if you enjoy these displays. Call Pat, 862-2214, if you have an idea for a display or a collection to exhibit.

■ **VINTAGE CAR OWNERS SHINE UP AUCTION.** Members of the Caveman Vintage Car Club lent their help to spruce up our auction. Unfortunately, we had to cancel the event, but we'd nonetheless like to thank Bill and Marifae Robinson, Mary and Paul Miller, Norm Tieman, Bob Webster, Sharon and Lou Dilda, John and Nancy Firth and Ken and Joan Cooke. We plan to reschedule.

■ **IT WAS A HAPPY HOLIDAY.** The Schmidt Holiday open house for the community was a huge success. Several visitors, Neila Moore, Carol Vorce, Sylvia Chapman and Kathleen Siegel donated their time and talent as did the Heaven Bound Gospel Group. Judy Boling cut down one of her trees for the children's room upstairs and volunteers

decorated it. Also Price Chopper, Albertson's Market, Redwood Select Market, Taco Bell, Burger King, Grocery Outlet, Fred Meyer, Rogue River Florist, Probst Flowers, Cluster's Tree Farm donated items to make the event happier. Members of the Grants Pass Boys and Girls Club were the happy recipients of many of the edible donations.

■ **WHAT'S YOUR SIGN?** You may have noticed a sign on the corner of Sixth and J pointing out that the society museum and research library is only a block away. The first week it was up, we had a visitor from Springfield, Larry Chase, who saw the sign, came in to research and became a member.

■ **RADIO DAYS.** Board member Mike Oaks has a Thursday bit on B.J. Calvert's morning KAJO program every week to spread some historical facts over the airwaves. Not content with promoting our history on the radio, Mike is now imitating Dear Abby by answering history questions on our Mondays Make History page in the Daily Courier.

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History at the center

Oaks leads effort to get new Williamsburg sign

Mike Oaks, new board member and long-time tramper through woods and glades in search of history is working to get support for a plaque to mark and memorialize Williamsburg.

Williams is the shortened name of the area now, though the original site of old Williamsburg was to the east of the Williams Creek Bridge, near Findley Road on the Williams Highway, according to Oaks.

The mining town has long since been abandoned and Oaks says it's important to mark it while a few people remember the original site of this raucous, hard-working town.

The proposed plaque would read as follows:

TOWN OF WILLIAMSBURG (Williams, Oregon)

Williamsburg had its birth in 1857

after gold was discovered on Williams Creek.

There were between 500 and 600 miners occupying the gulches and hillsides and engaging in commerce within the mining town.

The town boasted of a school, two hotels (the Burkdel and the Caldwell), three general merchandise stores (John Wood, J.T. Layton and Mr. Karewski's miners' supply and clothing store), three saloons and a blacksmith shop (John and David John, proprietors).

Around 1863 most of the miners left for other gold fields and the Chinese came by the hundreds to clean up the gold left by the former occupants.

The town site was located where the pond is now, on the bench of land immediately to the rear of this marker.

It has been silent now for many

years but if you close your eyes you might still hear the sounds of clinking glasses, laughter, and music from the many parties held on this original site of Williams, Oregon.

— Josephine County
Historical Society

The society is hoping to involve the community in all its facets — groups, businesses and individuals — in this project.

If you have feelings, suggestions or would like to help raise money for or help with the construction of this roadside monument to our past, contact Oaks by calling him at 479-8848.

Or drop suggestions — or insights into those businesses mentioned — by the society office at Fifth and J streets.



Michael Peil
President

1304 N.W. 6th St.
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

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From the collection

What time is it?

A new feature in the Oldtimer for the new year's worth of newsletters is "From the collection."

It will feature interesting items in the care of the society. Some may be recent acquisitions or some may be long held by the society.

In this case, the item is a new donation by Frank Sprinkle, son of Bess Probst, to the society. Obviously it has connections to one of the town's oldest businesses.

Can you figure out why this clock is backwards? Or what the letters around the face say?

Keep in mind that it's a bar clock and that old bars especially have patrons sitting at the long bar and looking into ... that's right, the bar mirror. In the mirror the clock would not only inform patrons of the time, but also suggest



they enjoy a Rheinlander beer.

An interesting point, probably not visible in this photo, is that the A in the word BAR has been painted out and replaced with a U. The name of the establishment was changed during Prohibition to conform with the long arm of the law — so the clock must predate the dry years of Josephine County.

Will you share some bulbs or plants with us?

Nancy Campbell, whose business, Zodiac Gardens, is donating part of her labor costs in keeping the grounds of the Schmidt House, asks for some help from our gardeners.

As you're working the homestead over this spring, perhaps dividing plants and bulbs, think of us. She could use seeds, bulbs and cuttings. Also used brick, weed barrier, stepping stones or rounds, fine gravel and bark chips.

Such donations will keep our downtown location looking great this summer.

Sharing is part of gardening: She's potted seedlings from the Schmidt holly bush for those who wish to plant a bit of history in their yards. For information, call Nancy at 474-4658.

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The budget

For members financially inclined, here's the 1996 budget for the Josephine County Historical Society as adopted Feb. 6, 1996, by the board of directors.

The current chair of the finance committee is Jim Savard. Contact him or Rose Scott with questions about the budget.

INCOME

Donations	8,000
Giftshop	3,500
Library	1,200
Membership dues	11,250
Programs	5,500
Trust Account	10,800
Western Savings	1,000
Income from advertising	2,100
Miscellaneous income	1,000

TOTAL \$44,350

EXPENSES

Advertising	600
Association dues	480
Building maintenance	800
Equipment maintenance	350
Grounds maintenance	2,500
Bookshop	900
Insurance	3,500
Legal/professional fees	600
Library supplies	300
Meetings	150
Misc. expenses	100
Office expenses	1,000
FICA	1,050
Photography	600
Postage	2,000
Printing	3,000
Property loan	4,100
Recognitions	200
Security	450
Timberland	100
Utilities	4,000
Salaries	15,000
Trust management	2,100
Other	470

TOTAL \$44,350

Paving donated for new research library

By Marilyn Luttrell

Our last newsletter notified you that the Ken Roberts Company had donated a house and the cost of moving it to our lots adjacent to the Schmidt House Museum.

Your generous response as well as that of friends in the community enabled us to construct a firm new foundation under the house now located at 512 S.W. Fifth St.

Although there isn't space in the newsletter to thank all the individual contributors, we do wish to acknowledge patrons Ann Cogswell and Amy Gilmore Hendrickson.

The most exciting news at this time is that we have received a major donation from the owners and employees of Copeland Paving Inc., and Riverside

Readymix who have agreed to contribute the materials, equipment and labor to provide the entire parking area, including sidewalks, curbs, street approaches and alley paving.

They have recently completed a front porch that is accessible to the handicapped.

So drive by sometime and watch the progress.

Before we can move the research library out of the barn and into the new facility, however, we need to renovate the home to conform to current codes and remodel the interior to fit the needs of a library.

Several fundraising events are planned for this year and we ask that you support these events. With your continued support, we can have a library/house-warming party in 1996.

Your new chairmen...

Besides new officers as described on the front page, we have new chairmen for the many committees that keep the society running. Here's the rundown:

Membership chair	Joan Momsen
Programs chair	Arden McConnell
Research library chair	Janet Lane
Publicity chair	Caroline Pitts
Finance chair	Jim Savard
Properties chair	Mel Shaw
Exhibits chair	Pat Bristol
Board development chair	Tom Bristol
Publishing chairs	Lee Ann Tardieu, Joan Momsen
Bookshop manager	Nancy Surran
Historic sites chair	Mike Oaks

The directors at large are:

Rick Alves, Gerrie Anderson, Judy Boling, Gordon Bowen, Judy Christensen, Fred Clark, Jim Clark, Barbara Clausen, Edith Decker, Dorothy Francis, Sherm Heater, Mike Peil, Chuck Schilder, Louis Schultz Jr., Virginia Steimer, Percy Wetherbee

Heston's story, told to Hill, finally in print

By Dorothy Francis

Edna May Hill has given us wonderful glimpses of one of the county's most interesting citizens, Col. Leroy Gray Heston, in the pages of her biography of him: "The Man Who Loved Flying."

Heston, who loved his roots, left his estate to the Josephine County Historical Society when he passed away.

Hill had the privilege of becoming acquainted with Heston after his days of global work and wandering. He was still a stately and charming man, always giving evidence that he was of the military.

She had known his parents, Alfred Milton and Emma Heston and his brother, Chester, after Leroy left home. Chester, seven years older than Leroy, would come into the stores in town to tell about the things his younger brother was doing out in the world whenever Leroy's weekly letter to his father arrived.

These letters, and photos and other treasures sent back from around the world, formed the base of the Heston collection — and the research Hill would do into his life.

Leroy was a nephew of Willie Heston, a highly acclaimed University of Michigan football player. When Willie heard of his nephew's fine football playing at Grants Pass High, he invited Leroy to come to Michigan to try out for

that program.

The young man went to uncle's and the university, which was the start of his long and interesting relationships with many of the greats and near-greats of the world.

He studied architecture and then engineering. He had learned surveying by working at the Savage Rapids Dam when he was at high school. While at the dam, he met Lewis H. Tuttle, a dam engineer, who became a lifelong friend of Heston and his family.

Just before graduating from the university, the field of aviation beckoned and he joined the new Army Air Corps

which led him to the Philippines, the Far East, the Burma Road and personal friendships with Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai Shek, General Claire Chennault and other movers and shakers.

He married the beautiful Pearl Fields Walsh in Manila on Feb. 28, 1935. She loved adventure, too, and

made a home for him where his friends could be welcomed in all the places he was called. Their parting came seven years before he died in 1982 at age 79, here in Grants Pass.

The author has told the story well, making this a biography that is interesting, educational and inspiring to read.

It will no doubt interest others in the story of Heston and perhaps doing further research into his multi-faceted life.

Sign 'em up

What: Booksignings for Edna May Hill's "The Man Who Loved Flying."

When: Two have been held; stay tuned to the box on the Mondays Make History page for more dates.

The Book: It's available at the Schmidt House bookstore, in paperback only, for \$8.95. Part of the proceeds go to the society.

"The Japanese hit the bridge over the Mekong River soon after it was completed, closing the Burma Road temporarily. They sent the people running for shelter in most of the towns along the route. One morning LeRoy recorded with his camera a bombing in Kunming from beyond the city where he and some others had established themselves to watch..."

-excerpt from
"The Man Who Loved
Flying" by Edna May Hill



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In memorium

The society regrets to inform the membership that the following members have passed away since our last newsletter:

Eleanora Clarkson

❖
Jackie Hays

❖
A. Donley Barnes

❖
Gilbert E. Walter

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"No Body Cares More About Your Image"

Society sponsors show

100 Years of Fashion and a Tea Social, a fashion show scheduled March 30, 11:30 a.m., at the Elks Lodge, is a benefit for the new Roberts library. It's co-sponsored by the Emblem Club of the Elks Lodge.

Tickets for the show are \$7, available at the Schmidt House or by mailing a check payable to the society and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the society.

There's limited seating, so order now.

THE OLDTIMER NEWSLETTER

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